

ESL Website

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

Megan Hoppe
Katie Lohmeyer

Thesis Advisor
Lynne Stallings

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynne Stallings".

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

4/29/11

Expected Date of Graduation
5/7/11

2001
2001
The
2489
2001
2001

Abstract

As the population of non-English speaking people in the United States grows, elementary teachers are faced with the daunting task of teaching non-English speaking students. A large percentage of elementary teachers have not been formally trained in teaching these English Language Learners. Not only must elementary teachers instruct students in English, they must also teach math, science, and social studies. With all of the demands placed on elementary teachers, being prepared to meet all students' academic needs can be a daunting task. As two pre-service elementary teachers who have been trained in English as a Second Language, we have built this website to help teachers gather information about their learners and the best practices for meeting their needs.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Dr. Stallings for her guidance, enthusiasm, and patience as we have put together this thesis website. Thank you for effectively instructing us over the years so that we would be equipped and motivated to complete such a task.

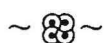
Authors' Statement

As pre-service elementary teachers with concentrations in English as a Second Language, we have a unique perspective into the Elementary Education world. For the past few years, we have observed our elementary colleagues' struggles to educate English learners in mainstream elementary classrooms. We asked fellow teachers what they areas they believed would be the most helpful to know in reaching these learners. We organized their comments into two general needs: knowing the process or steps to take in helping these students and having access to practical materials and ideas they can use to assist them. As teachers with knowledge in the ESL field, we want to assist our peers in gaining the knowledge they need to confidently teach their students. Our goal with our thesis is to aid teachers by consolidating the ESL knowledge we have gained throughout our college career into an easily accessible format.

We chose to format our thesis as a website because it is the most practical and effective way of distributing what we know to teachers who need it. A website has widespread influence and is a free source that teachers are able to access, whenever they wish. This format respects the limited amount of time that teachers have available for research. We feel that teachers would be more willing and likely to use the Internet than paper sources to look up pertinent information. Upon choosing this format we decided to analyze and critique other ESL websites to see what information was available already, how it was formatted and the general accessibility of the websites. One criticism we noted was that websites often provided too much, too little or inaccurate information that teachers would have to sort through. Therefore, we have tried to make the information on our website concise and to the point. By providing the information we feel is important for all elementary educators to know, we will be helping them to provide a quality education for English learners that meets their specific needs.

On our website we purposefully chose a variety of formatting such as videos, lists, short paragraphs, links and documents so that teachers would not have to read lengthy text to find relevant information. We understand that teachers are on a time crunch and so our outline and format were created to respect that. In researching for our project, we found that other websites tended to lean toward what an ESL instructor, as opposed to the mainstream classroom teacher, would do or simply had worksheets that were not as effective as they could be. Instead of those features, which already are in great supply on the Internet, we wanted to focus on best practices. We wanted to provide practical techniques and strategies that would enhance what teachers are already doing. This will benefit all students, including English learners, rather than singling them out with an alternative activity or assignment. We modeled these strategies for teachers using real lesson plans, on which we highlighted our thoughts and reasoning behind what elements we included in the lessons.

This project is an accurate representation of what we have learned during the last four years at Ball State University. First, it incorporates our knowledge of both our elementary education majors and our ESL concentrations. Second, it is a testament to the important lessons we learned in the Honors College. During our many Honors classes, we learned the importance of being proactive in solving a problem. In our methods classes and field experiences, we realized there was a significant problem in the information gap between the elementary education and ESL populations and wanted to be part of the solution. We discovered this through our peers and cooperating teachers' questions and comments to us about how ill prepared they felt when teaching these students. We could have chosen to write a thirty page paper on the topic, but we felt a website would be more useful and meaningful in solving the problem. We know that it is our duty as (almost) Honors College graduates to use our knowledge to educate and to creatively face life's problems. We hope that this website will grow over the years and spread to others so that English learners can receive the education they deserve and their teachers will no longer struggle to accommodate them appropriately. These teachers and students can then focus on learning rather than building up frustrations in school and life.



Katie Lohmeyer and Megan Hoppe

Personal Author's Statement

Through my time preparing to be an English as a Second Language instructor, I have grown in my desire to advocate for ESL students. Over the last four years, I have come in contact with many international students of all ages. I have been repeatedly struck by the idea that many of these individuals have a genuine desire to learn English and to experience American culture. However, many of the pre-service educators that I have worked with have received any information about how to interact with and support these English language learners. When Miss Lohmeyer asked me to be a part of her honors thesis creative project, I was thrilled. I would be so happy if our website created a more positive experience for even one ESL student. I hope that this website can be a tool for many elementary teachers which will benefit the ESL and education communities.

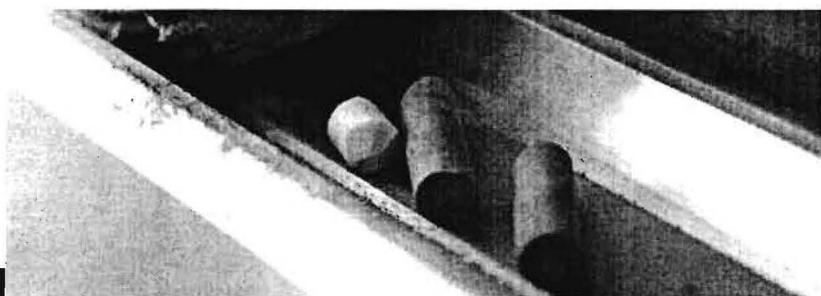
Compiling the information for this website was an opportunity for personal growth, as well. It required me to synthesize a lot of information that I had gathered from my Ball State classes, from reading professional literature, and from my own teaching experiences. It also required me to evaluate the importance and practicality of all of this information. I wanted our site to include only practical information in a easy-to-access format, so that busy teachers would be more likely to find the specific information that they need. The process of creating this site solidified and strengthened my personal knowledge of best practice in instructing ESL students.

~ ☯ ~

Megan Hoppe

Thesis

Our thesis can be found at eslhelp4teachers.weebly.com



ESL HELP

[Home](#)

[ESL Acronyms](#)

[Life as an ESL student](#)

[FAQs](#)

[Proficiency Levels](#)

[Differentiating Lessons](#)

[Activities and Ideas](#)

[Resources for Teachers](#)

[Resources for Students](#)

About Us



Welcome to our website! We are two Elementary Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages teachers who seek to help fellow elementary teachers.

Our Mission is to...

- give general elementary education teachers information about English learners
- share classroom ideas that have been proven to work
- showcase best practice techniques
- ultimately help English learners get the best education possible!

Contact Information

If you would like to contact us with questions or suggestions about anything in regards to English learners, please fill in the contact form below.

Contact Form

Name *

Works Cited

Books and articles from which we have gathered and compiled information:

Brown, H. Douglas (2004). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. San Francisco State University: Pearson Education

Cary, Stephen (2007). *Working with English Language Learners: Answers to Teachers' Top Ten Questions*. Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH

Diaz-Rico, Lynne T. (2008) *Strategies for Teaching English Learners*. Boston: Pearson Education

Echevarria, Jana A., Short, Deborah J. & Vogt, MaryEllen J. (2009). *Making Content Comprehensible For Elementary English Learners: The SIOP Model*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon

Indiana Department of English Learning and Migrant Education
<http://www.doe.in.gov/lmmp/>

Indiana State Board of Education and Indiana ESL Task Force. *Levels of English Proficiency & Corresponding Student Actions*. Indiana: Indiana State Board of Education

Indiana State Board of Education and Indiana ESL Task Force (2003). *Indiana's English Language Proficiency Standards*. Indiana: Indiana State Board of Education

Tannenbaun, Jo-Ellen (1996) *Practical Ideas on Alternative Assessment for ESL Students*. Retrieved on April 19, 2010 from:
<http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/tannen01.html>

Similar websites used as examples of which elements were necessary/unnecessary:

www.colorincolorado.org

www.eslcafe.com

www.englishclub.com

www.everythingsl.net

<http://iteslj.org/>

<http://literacy.calumet.purdue.edu/student/ewhite00/index.html>

<http://rpmeredith.iweb.bsu.edu/ESLFinal/>

Photos and videos:**Top of all pages:**

Ajari, "Heiwa elementary school" September 6, 2009 via flickr, Creative Commons Attribution

Home page:

Woodleywonderworks', "First grade reading- small group breakout" October 11, 2009 via flickr, Creative Commons Attribution

FAQ page:

One Laptop per Child, "Mongolia," January 17, 2008 via Flickr, Creative Commons License

Pink Sherbet Photography, "Happy Girl Hopscotch in Strawberry Free Creative Commons," September 5, 2006 via Flickr, Creative Commons License

Woodleywonderworks, "Teaching with emotion: a Halloween story," October 24, 2008 via Flickr, Creative Commons License

Activities and ideas page:

<cleverCl@i®>, "Chinese class" January 29, 2007 via flickr, Creative Commons Attribution

woodleywonderworks, "school friends" September 14, 2007 via flickr, Creative Commons Attribution